trains were operated on that day towards Eastern side to carry people towards Bihar and Eastern U.P.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Female foeticide and sex selective abortions in Himachal Pradesh

*43. SHRI BALAVANT *ALIAS* BAL APTE: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that female foeticide and sex selective abortions are common in Himachal Pradesh;

(b) whether the National Commission for Women has called for a thorough check on the use of ultrasound techniques in the State; and

(c) what is the response of the State Government to the problem?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS): (a) There has been a decline in the child sex ratio in Himachal Pradesh from 951 to 897 between 1991 and 2001. One of the reasons for this decline could be female foeticide and sex selective abortions.

(b) National Commission for Women visited Himachal Pradesh from 15-16 July, 2004, to evaluate the progress of the development of women so as to safeguard the dignity and protect the rights of the women in the country. The issue relating to female foeticide and sex selective abortions, being common in Himachal Pradesh, was raised in the proactive consultation meeting with NGO/social activist etc. The concern expressed by them is put up before the heads of the State Government's Departments for their reaction and plan of action for the resolution in a meeting co-chaired by Chief Secretary of the State Government and the Chairperson of the National Commission for Women.

(c) The State Government has taken the following action:—

- The State has notified State Appropriate Authority and District Appropriate Authorities in the State to strictly implement the PNDT Act.

- All the Ultrasound Centres in Government sector and Private sector have been registered by the District Appropriate Authorities.
- The Task Force has been constituted in the State to supervise and monitor the Ultrasound Centres.
- Awareness Camps are being organized to create awareness among the women groups in all the districts.
- Wide publicity to stop sex selective abortion is being made through hoardings, bus panels and posters etc.
- Female-male ratio is being monitored block-wise through Civil Registration System and the feed back is being give to the blocks with low female-male ratio to take appropriate action.

Suger industries' suggestion on SAP of sugarcane

*47. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the sugar industry has sought an overhaul of cane price regime and to lower the statutory Minimum Cane Price (SMP) fixing it on zonal basis linking to average and not peak recover; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government to the anomalies pointed out by the industry?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) As per the present practice, Government have notified a uniform Statutory Minimum Price (SMP) for the entire country for sugarcane at Rs. 74.50 per quintal linked to a basic recovery of 8.5% subject to a premium of Rs. 0.88 for every 0.1% point rise in the recovery above that level for sugar season 2004-05, compared to Rs. 73.00 per quintal for the sugar season 2003-04 linked to a basic recovery of 8.5%. Requests for different SMPs for different Regions was not agreed to by Government declares one uniform price for the entire country for different agricultural commodities. Government have, however, decided that with effect from 2004-05 sugar season the factory-wise SMP of sugarcane will be fixed by taking into account the whole season's recovery rate instead of the peak period